

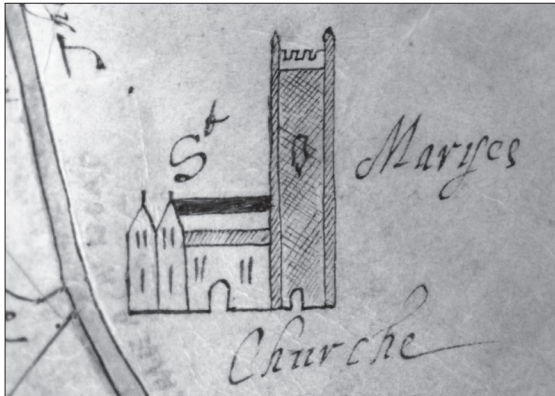
THE RECORDER



THE ANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WILTSHIRE RECORD SOCIETY

EDITORIAL

The 2016 AGM took place, unusually, in St Mary's Church, Devizes. This is a church in the process of revitalisation and the congregation, who attend the occasional service there, was invited to join our meeting, which they were happy to do. After a short business meeting, the gathering was addressed by two speakers both familiar to members: Dr Alex Craven, one of our Committee members, and Tim Tatton-Brown. Alex gave a presentation based on his new WRS volume (see below) and Tim spoke on the architecture of St Mary's Church.



*St Mary's Church, Devizes, from map of 1647
(WSA: 1553/77H)*

After the usual excellent tea, and in between rain showers, Tim Tatton-Brown conducted a tour of the outside of the church, pointing out interesting features which would have been missed on a cursory view of the building. Those who felt they could brave the deluges followed him for a short walk along St Mary's Street, where more architectural gems were discovered.

Sally Thomson, Editor

'SUSPECTED PERSONS' IN WILTSHIRE DURING THE CROMWELLIAN PROTECTORATE

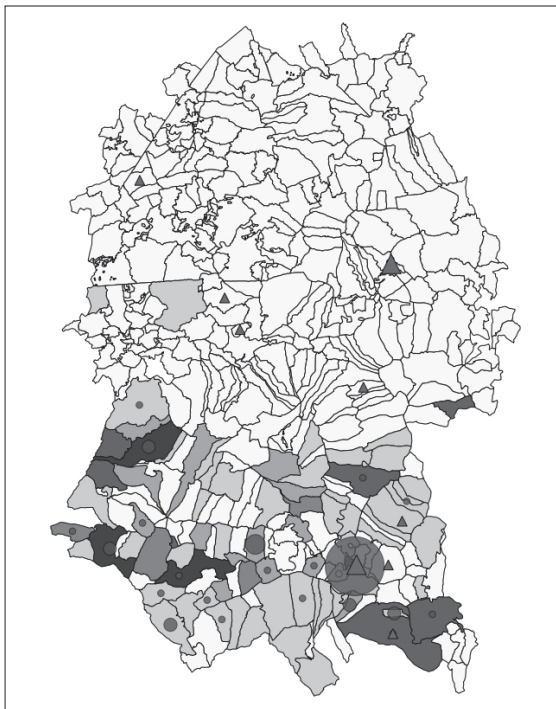
Following the failed Royalist uprising led by Colonel John Penruddock of Compton

Chamberlayne in March 1655,¹ Cromwell placed the country under a system of military rule.² Major-General John Desborough, who had put down the rebellion, was put in charge of Wiltshire and its neighbours. In January 1656 the council sent down instructions to Desborough and his commissioners.³ They should disarm and take bonds from all suspicious persons, Catholics and those who had ever fought for the King, but also those who lived dissolutely, or whose lifestyle seemed far more expensive than their wealth should support. They were to note all innkeepers, who were to send the commissioners lists of their patrons, to close any inn that stood dangerously alone out of town, and to suppress horse races, stage plays and other assemblies that might provide cover for conspiracy. The wording of the bonds that were taken from 'suspected persons' was broad, requiring those who entered into them neither to plot against the state, nor to consent to any plot, and to report any conspiracy. Their open-endedness, with no time limit to the good behaviour they exacted, was a grievous concern to the Royalists bound over.⁴ Indeed, it was of such concern that some anxious Wiltshire gentlemen still felt it prudent to petition Parliament as late as 1663 to secure the recovery of bonds still then held by one of the commissioners.⁵

To help monitor those from whom they took security, the commissioners were to send lists of their names to the council's agent in London, Thomas Dunn, for him to register them. The Commissioners were also to inform him when any of these Royalists intended to travel to London. The register of suspected persons for the south-western counties contains over 5,000 names, drawn from the five counties of Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset, and Wiltshire.⁶ It is a remarkable list not only for its size but also for the diversity of individuals included. The lords and gentlemen one might expect to find are accompanied by a far greater number of artisans, tradesmen, and labourers. Indeed, so unusual was this that Dunn had to write in April 1656 to one of Desborough's commissioners in Somerset to

reiterate that they were to take security of 'obscure people... Husbandmen, Weavers, Bakers, and such like...'⁷

Of the 5,000 men listed in the south-western register, only a small proportion – some 376 – were from Wiltshire. Amongst them were one lord, one baronet, two esquires, and 35 gentlemen, as well as one clergyman and a doctor of law. Almost half were engaged in agriculture or husbandry (15 yeomen, 152 husbandmen, one shearer, seven shepherds), whilst 48 were employed in the cloth trade (mainly as weavers or tailors). The remaining 112 men were employed in some 49 trades, which included butchers, carpenters, masons, shoemakers and blacksmiths, but also a coachman, a musician, and a gunsmith. Unsurprisingly, the city of Salisbury returned the largest number of suspects, with 41, and the greatest range of occupations. But perhaps the most surprising aspect about the list is that it is composed almost exclusively of men from the southern third of the county, with only two men drawn from parishes north of Westbury. Besides Salisbury and its suburbs, three apparent focal points emerge: Warminster and its neighbours; the parishes between Tisbury and Stourton; and the south-east border with Hampshire. Of the parishes to the north of Salisbury, only Stapleford, Amesbury, and Collingbourne Ducis had ten or more suspects.



Map of Wiltshire, 1655, showing parishes which returned lists of 'suspected persons'. Circles represent numbers of gentlemen present in a parish, triangles the commissioners.

How should we interpret these results? To begin with, the absence of returns from two-thirds of the county must be treated as an anomaly. It is not apparent

how this happened; it may be that the commissioners in Wiltshire omitted to send returns from these divisions of the county to the central office in London, or that these returns were mislaid or overlooked in the London office. However, even having returns from just the southern third of the county is intriguing, as Penruddock's rising was confined to this part of the county. By the time that the lists were put together, ten months after the rising, many of Penruddock's confederates had been executed or transported. This perhaps explains why Penruddock's home parish of Compton Chamberlayne is not one of the focal points. Nevertheless, we might expect support for his cause to be concentrated in the south, especially in Salisbury (where Penruddock had proclaimed the King and taken the sheriff captive), so it is frustrating not to be able to compare this area with returns from the other parts of the county.

Nevertheless, it is important to remember that when the commissioners drew up these lists, they were ordered to take note of anybody considered suspicious, and not just those who had actively borne arms in 1655. We must therefore look beyond Penruddock's supporters to analyse these returns. Seventeenth-century governments all faced practical difficulties in learning about dissent and dissidents within local communities. Without the levels of bureaucracy employed during later centuries, seventeenth-century regimes were forced to rely upon the personal knowledge (and prejudices) of its officers, or the initiative of informants within an individual community. On that basis, the concentration of suspects within certain parishes might be less a reflection of Royalism than of support for the Protectorate regime, with high numbers of suspects reflecting proximity to an active magistrate or a zealous informant. Of course, individuals were also not above using the divisions of the 1650s to carry on personal rivalries or to promote their own interests. At first glance, the location of the Wiltshire commissioners seems to support this idea, with five of the eleven men resident in Salisbury or parishes close to it. However, none of the other six commissioners lived in the south-west of the county, where the concentration of our suspects was highest, and the inclusion of commissioners from Bromham, Devizes, Grittleton, and Marlborough makes the absence of results from the north and central areas of the county even more inexplicable.

An alternative explanation is that many of the 'obscure people' included amongst the returns were servants of the Royalist gentlemen listed alongside them.⁸ An analysis of the returns does appear to suggest a correlation between the presence of gentry and suspects, with higher numbers of noblemen in Warminster, Mere, and Downton, three of the parishes most represented among the returns. However, the larger numbers of gentlemen returned for Dinton

and Donhead does not seem to be reflected in larger numbers of suspects from these parishes, while we must ask whether the solitary presence of Richard Kitson of Flamstone House explains the high levels of returns for the parish of Tisbury. One noteworthy absence from this list is Lord Arundell, or indeed any suspects from the parish of Wardour, whose family resided in Hampshire after the destruction of Wardour castle in 1644.⁹ Nevertheless, the large numbers of returns from the neighbouring parish of Tisbury, and the cluster of gentry returned in the parishes to the south, might still be explained by their proximity to Wardour. The presence of the Catholic Royalist Lord Stourton further explains why there was such a concentration of returns from the south-west corner of the county. Of course, as we might expect, all these areas are eclipsed by Salisbury, with the highest numbers of returns, gentlemen, and commissioners in the county.

Ultimately the anomalous nature of these returns, with such small numbers and so uneven a distribution across the county, makes it impossible to draw any firm conclusions from the Wiltshire data alone. More work must now be done to analyse the returns from across all five counties, and also to understand better the reasons behind the inclusion of individuals on one of these lists. Nevertheless, these returns provide an intriguing glimpse into a world of dissent at a level not always visible to the historian of the 1650s.

Alex Craven

References:

1. The best introduction remains Austin Woolrych's succinct account: A.H. Woolrych, *Penruddock's Uprising 1655* (London, 1955).
2. For the full history of this period, see Christopher Durston, *Cromwell's Major Generals* (Manchester, 2001).
3. The eleven commissioners had been named in the previous month: *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, ed. Thomas Birch (London, 1742), IV, pp. 287–301, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/thurloe-papers/vol4/pp287-301>.
4. Durston, pp. 130–33.
5. *Commons Journal*, VIII, 438.
6. British Library, Add. MS 34,012, 'A book containing the names of all such persons as are specified in several lists received from the Deputies of General Disbrow Major General for the Counties of Wilts, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Gloucester'. Despite its name, there are no entries for Cornwall. A microfilm copy of this document is held by the Wiltshire & Swindon Archives: WSA, X9/1.
7. British Library, Add. MS 19516, 'A booke of such letters as from tyme to tyme have been sent from this Office to the Major Generalls of the respective associacions of the severall counties of this nation', f. 24.
8. For these purposes, 'the gentry' refers to anybody who was referred to as 'gentleman', 'esquire', 'knight', 'baronet', or 'lord' in these returns. There was a total of 39 men described using one of these terms in the returns from Wiltshire.

9. Peter Sherlock, 'Arundell, Henry, third Baron Arundell of Wardour (bap. 1608, d. 1694)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2009 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk/view/article/716>, accessed 27 Jan 2017]

THE CORSHAM PORTRAIT OF JOHN ASHE: A QUESTION OF IDENTITY

In 'A List of the Paintings in the State Rooms at Corsham Court' – the famous collection made by the diplomat Paul Methuen (1672–1757) – painting number 232, which hangs unobtrusively in one of the corridors, is described as being a portrait of 'John Ashe of Teffont (c.1600–59)' and attributed to Sir Peter Lely (1618–80). The sitter has long been thought to be the clothier usually known as John Ashe of Freshford, Somerset (1598–1659), a highly successful cloth manufacturer and politician, a sizeable landowner in Wiltshire, and an ancestor of Lord Methuen, the owner of Corsham Court.¹



John Ashe, from the Methuen Collection

The Ashe family became prominent in Wiltshire in the course of the seventeenth century. Originally from Devon, the clothier branch of the family settled in Tudor times at Westcombe, in the parish of Batcombe in east Somerset, where John Ashe was baptised on 27 October 1597. In 1621 he married Elizabeth Davison, the daughter of a clothier and fulling-mill owner of Freshford on the river Frome, which there forms the border between Somerset and Wiltshire. John Ashe moved to Freshford and rapidly built a thriving business producing Spanish cloth –

a high-quality lightweight broadcloth, usually dyed in the wool – which was marketed by his younger brothers, Edward (1599–1656) and Jonathan (c. 1619–65) in London, and Joseph (1617–86) at Antwerp.³ By the 1630s John Ashe was so prosperous that he could buy out his father-in-law, build a mansion beside the mill-house at Freshford, and purchase the manor of Beckington, near Frome. Next, his ambitions turned to expansion in Wiltshire, and to politics. In 1640 he and his brother Edward acquired the manor of Westbury Maudits; the same year John was elected MP for Westbury and Edward for Heytesbury; and in 1641 Edward bought the manor of Heytesbury. Both men were staunch supporters of Parliament against the King, and served as members of the Somerset and Wiltshire county committees during the Civil War.

From 1643 to 1650 John Ashe served as chairman of the Goldsmith's Hall committee, set up by Parliament to extract money from Royalists to help pay for the army. In this role he was well-placed both to help out local Royalists such as James, 3rd Earl of Marlborough, and to benefit from their need to sell assets. In 1647 the committee granted John Ashe control of the Earl's house and lands at Teffont Evias, near Salisbury, until 'certain debts or legacies' had been paid; in 1648 he bought the Earl's manor of Heywood, near Westbury; and in 1652 he bought Teffont outright. In the same decades he also bought property in Wiltshire at Shaw, Melksham, and Fyfield (near Pewsey).³

Neither John nor Edward Ashe voted for the execution of King Charles in 1649 – both had been excluded from the Commons in Pride's Purge of December 1648, though both were later readmitted and became strong supporters of Cromwell. But from 1650 onwards, when he was no longer involved at Goldsmith's Hall, John was able to return to Freshford when Parliament was not sitting, and to reinvigorate his cloth business, probably in close co-operation with his son-in-law, Paul Methuen (1613–67). The third son of the Rector of St John's, Frome, Methuen married John Ashe's daughter Grace during the 1640s and set up as a clothier in Bradford-on-Avon.⁴

According to John Aubrey, Paul Methuen 'succeeded his father-in-law in the trade, and was the greatest clothier of his time,'⁵ so it is easy to see why the Corsham Collection, established by his grandson, the diplomat Paul Methuen II, might include a portrait of such an eminent ancestor as John Ashe of Freshford. However it is far less easy to understand why a portrait of the clothier should ever have been described, as it is on the frame, as of *Mr Ashe of Teffont*. John Ashe the clothier-politician was known almost invariably as 'of Freshford', where he had lived ever since his marriage in 1621. He is not known ever to have lived at Teffont, which in fact he appears to have bought for one of his sons, also named John, who at

that time was a merchant at Antwerp. It was to John Ashe II of Antwerp that his father left the house and lands at Teffont in his will dated 15 March 1657;⁶ and the younger man may have occupied it already, since his own son, John Ashe III, is said to have been born there in 1655.⁷

John Ashe II had been born c.1627, the second son of John Ashe I and Elizabeth Davison. Little is known of his early life, but by January 1649 he was in London, where his father gave him £20, and by October the same year he was in Antwerp, where his uncle Joseph sent him 48 cloths.⁸ It is intriguing that Joseph had close ties to the Royalist cause, and may have opposed his elder brothers politically despite sharing their commercial interests. Probably with Joseph's encouragement, their sister Sarah married the Antwerp merchant John Shaw, who provided crucial financial support to Royalists in exile during the 1650s.⁹ It is likely that John II was employed in Antwerp either by Shaw or as Joseph's junior partner. He was still there in 1657 when John Ashe senior wrote his will, bequeathing Teffont and Beckington to him, but returned to England when his father died in February 1659 and was granted administration of the will in June that year.

The restoration of the monarchy followed peacefully in 1660, and John Shaw returned to London. Both Shaw and Joseph Ashe were knighted and rewarded with lucrative offices for their loyalty to Charles II. John Ashe II seems to have returned to England permanently around this time. In 1666, as 'John Ashe of Teffont', he sold the east (manorial) aisle of Beckington church to James Hayes of Lincoln's Inn, a secretary to Prince Rupert,¹⁰ and on 27 December 1683 wrote his own will, bequeathing the manor of Beckington to his nephew John Methuen (1650–1706), a rising barrister at the Inner Temple.¹¹ By 1689 John Ashe II was dead, and Teffont passed to his son John Ashe III (1655–1704), who three years later sold the manor and the house and emigrated to Carolina. A memorial in St Michael's, Teffont Evias, records that he died in London in 1704 while leading a delegation of colonists to petition Queen Anne.

Thus it seems certain that only John Ashe of Antwerp and his son John Ashe III would ever have been described as 'Mr Ashe of Teffont', the inscription on the frame of the Corsham Hall portrait. Could this likeness in fact be of one of these two men, rather than of the clothier? If so, and if the portrait is indeed by Peter Lely, who died in 1680, it can only be of John Ashe II, since it clearly shows a mature man, and not the youth that John Ashe III was in Lely's lifetime. It may have been painted in the 1660s, after John II returned to England permanently: his uncle Joseph, newly knighted, had a much grander three-quarter-length portrait painted by Lely c.1660–65.¹²

How or when the portrait passed to the Methuen family is unknown.¹³ It may have been in the family

before Paul Methuen II began buying fine art at the London auctions in the 1720s. Did John Ashe II bequeath the portrait to his nephew John Methuen along with the manor of Beckington? Did John Ashe III inherit the portrait on his father's death and give it to John Methuen before emigrating to Carolina? Whatever is the case, if the inscription *Mr Ashe of Teffont* was made at any time before Paul Methuen II's death in 1757, it was almost certainly made for someone who knew or had known the sitter.¹⁴ Even Paul Methuen II, who was fifteen years old when his great-uncle died, is unlikely to have mistaken his identity. Thus the Corsham portrait is more credibly a likeness of the merchant John Ashe II (c.1627–c.1687), than of his father, the clothier–politician John Ashe I (1597–1659).

John Gaisford

References:

1. Mr James Methuen–Campbell, the curator of the collection, is the 8th Baron Methuen. He kindly informed me that the portrait was attributed to Lely by Sir Oliver Millar (d. 2007), Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures and an expert on seventeenth-century paintings.
2. Ferris, J.P. 'Sir Joseph Ashe (1617–86)', www.housesofparliament.org. Articles on the MPs John and Edward Ashe will soon be published in the same place; until then see Wroughton, J, 'John Ashe (1597–1659)', www.oxforddnb.com.
3. *VCH Wiltshire* vols 7 (Shaw and Melksham), 8 (Westbury Maudits and Heywood), 13 (Teffont Evias) & 16 (Fyfield, in Milton Lilbourne).
4. Rogers, KH 'Paul Methuen (1613–67)', www.oxforddnb.com.
5. Aubrey, J, *The Natural History of Wiltshire*, ed. Britton, J, (London, 1847) p.113.
6. TNA PROB 11/293/280.
7. Wall monument at St Michael's, Teffont Evias.
8. TNA C107/17/5.
9. Ferris, J.P. 'Sir John Shaw (1615–80)', www.housesofparliament.org.
10. Somerset Record Office DD\BR\bs/1.
11. The will has not been found, but its date is recorded in WRO 212A/36/42.
12. Now at Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk: www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/1401171.
13. It was certainly in the collection before 1806: information from Mr Methuen–Campbell.
14. The usage 'Mr Ashe of Teffont', without a forename or dates, might suggest that the inscription was made in the sitter's lifetime, when his identity would have been self-evident. If it was made after Paul Methuen's death, perhaps in the 1780s when the collection was being visited by the public, it could even be erroneous.

John Gaisford was awarded a doctorate at Birkbeck, University of London, in 2015. His thesis, entitled 'Capital in the Countryside: social change in West Wiltshire, 1530–1680', describes the impact of the cloth trade on life in West Wiltshire and East Somerset, and includes a detailed study of the village of Bulkington. It can be found online at

www.bbktheses.da.ulcc.ac.uk/143. There is a bound copy in the History Centre at Chippenham. John is currently editing the business accounts of the Ashe family during the Civil War and Interregnum.

CONFLICT IN THE CATHEDRAL CLOSE

Among a bundle of miscellaneous papers in the Bishop's section of the diocesan archives I came across a document relating to the right of access through the Close of Salisbury cathedral that I would like to bring to the attention of members.

The Dean and Chapter (D&C) prepared a case to be heard probably at the Assizes. John Hutchins, a labourer, formerly of Salisbury, was presented by the grand jury of Wiltshire for breaking down an iron chain, 3 yards in length, across the North gate of the Close into the High Street on 7 Aug 1693.

Citing various charters the case sets out the interesting and lengthy history beginning with the moving of the cathedral from old to new Sarum in the early 13th century which necessitated an alteration to the route of the old 'western road' in order that it ran through the new city, and the construction of the great bridge known as Harnham bridge by Bishop Bingham. The road ran eastwards around the wall of the cathedral close along Exeter Street.

A section of the oath of the porter of the Close, relating to the opening and closing of the North, South and East gates, is transcribed, and the point made that such restrictions were inconsistent with its being a common highway.

The custom was for the South gate to be kept half shut to prevent the access of carts, but because of the inconvenience to the inhabitants of the Close, (owing to the distance from the Porter's lodge by the North gate, where the keys were kept), about 10 to 12 years previously the practice ceased and it was kept open in the day time, as with the East gate. This was not the case at the North gate where a chain was kept to prevent entry by carts. About 10 years previously the chain was moved a few paces from where it stood because of the erection of a public building by Bishop Seth Ward (a reference the Matrons' College).

Hutchins' action may have been motivated in part because the diversion around the Close took travellers away from the High street and so 'lessened and impaired' trade there. No accomplices are mentioned but it is unlikely that he acted without the encouragement and support of others.

The D&C acknowledged that although anciently no layman or stranger had lived in the Close, several houses held by chantry priests passed to the Crown on the suppression of chantries [in 1547] and had subsequently been granted as freehold to laymen and strangers. Their right of free access to and from their houses was upheld, and keys were always available to them to unlock the gates and chains.

In making the case for the way through the Close not being a common highway, the D & C was to prove that time out of mind a chain had been there to prevent free and unlicensed access to the Close. This was to be supported by the evidence of Anthony Davis, a drayman in the city for 40 years who would state that he always went to the porter for the key to unlock the chain when he carried beer into the Close. Dr Whitby, the precentor of the Cathedral, would prove that money was raised by voluntary subscription to repair the road in the Close. Thomas Naish would prove that for several years he had repaired the roads on the account of the D & C. Unfortunately Naish makes no mention of the case in his diary published by the society (WRS vol 20). I checked the Quarter Sessions records for Michaelmas 1693 (the first court after the incident) but found no mention of the case, hence my assumption that it was heard at the Assize. I have not looked any further into this and would welcome any thoughts on the significance of the document. I have removed it from the bishop's papers and placed it in the records of the peculiar jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter under ref WSA D24/24/1.

Steve Hobbs

RAMBLINGS FROM THE RECORD OFFICE

(Abridged)

I was looking recently at B.H. Cunnington's *Records of the County of Wilts*, and remembered a couple of mis-readings in it, each explained by a note. In 1604 we read of John Paynes bezzy, the latter word being possibly Bezonian = a beggar. It actually reads 'John Saynesberry'. In the same year a petitioner spoke of King James's Royall stede, stede meaning, in Anglo-Saxon, a place or spot; the actual reading is 'seede. An even better example of explaining away a wrong reading comes from Canon Jones's article on Terumber's Chantry at Trowbridge in *W.A.M.* vol.x. The phrase 'A tune called the Hurl' about the chantry's property in Beckington gives rise to a four-line footnote linking Tune to the Anglo-Saxon tyning, etc. The real reading is 'An inne called the Harte'.

The late County Archivist, Maurice Rathbone, was always amused by Cunnington's index, his favourite entry being (about an old soldier) 'Saw much Service'. Rathbone used to wonder whether it would have been better as 'Service, much, Saw' or 'Much Service, Saw'. Although a quiet man, Rathbone had a well-developed sense of humour. He was much pleased when he received a circular addressed to the various county establishments asking for details of what machinery was used for cleaning and how it was operated. His reply to the first was 'Brush', but he went to town on the second - 'On the day on which cleaning operations are to be undertaken, the

door of the brush cupboard is opened by means of the handle provided, and the brush is taken out' This went on for several lines, but unluckily I didn't keep a copy. I think the brush cupboard was a fiction. We did have at the Trowbridge office a cleaner who used to sweep the strong-room floors from time to time, and dust the tops of the boxes and the shelves, but quite honestly, there was very little dust. The idea that archives are essentially dusty, often coupled with their being kept in vaults or cellars underground, is one that appears on historical programmes on TV from time to time. The presenters will speak of documents being 'unearthed', and sometimes almost imply that they themselves found them. Little tribute is paid to the finding systems by which the documents are identified and produced. I was impressed only the other day by the ease with which the Bavarian State Archives were able to produce the documentation of what must have been at the time a very unimportant matter, President Trump's grandfather's return to Germany from the US, and his unsuccessful attempt to resume his residence in his native country.

James Terumber, the founder of the Trowbridge chantry, did historians a disservice by describing himself in the foundation deed as a merchant, when we know from other sources that he was a clothier, or clothman, to use the common term of the period. This led Canon Jones to assume wrongly that he was a Merchant of the Staple, a body concerned entirely with the export of English wool to the Continent. I once heard one of the guides at Westwood Manor telling a party that the Horton family who built it were 'wool merchants', which is, of course, exactly what they were not - they were at the other end of the production chain. The same confusion gave rise to the idea that Steeple Ashton was originally 'Staple Ashton', although all the early forms make it clear that they come from steeple. In an article on 'The Rise and Fall of Steeple Ashton as a Market Town' in *W.A.M.* xxxii, E.P. Knubley (the vicar) went one step further, telling us that the merchants of the staple had their own market house; this is a fine old house which still bears the name The Old Merchants' Hall today. When it was for sale two or three years ago, a new level of fiction in its history was reached, when it was stated that Judge Jeffreys held courts in it. Knubley also included a quotation from Leland, but interpolated, within the quotation marks, an extra sentence of his own, 'There are still some ancient timber houses' - a most un-Leland like statement.

The Staple Ashton idea is one that turns up regularly among the questions at local history lectures, as do the 'Flemish Weavers' and the 'secret tunnels', which are almost always associated with nunneries. A question which was almost always asked at Bradford was whether it is true that Bradford in Yorkshire was named after our Bradford - though I don't think I've ever seen this in print.

A query in the last Trowbridge Civic Society's *Newsletter* raise the point as to whether the Bythesea family were originally called Delamere. It is, of course, inherently unlikely that a name with implications of 'Norman blood', perhaps even of having 'come over with the Conqueror', would be exchanged for the odd, even faintly comic, Bythesea. A change was more likely to be in the opposite direction, as witness the Beach/de la Beche monuments in Steeple Ashton church. The Delamere idea first appears, as far as I know, in that feeblest of local histories, P.J. Goodrich's *Trowbridge and its Times*. It was unknown to the compiler of the scholarly account of the family in Burke's *Commoners*. He dismissed another fable about a baby found on a beach, pointing out that Bythesea is simply a locational surname and that the family came from near the Somerset coast before moving to Trowbridge in the 17th century. Anyway, we now have in Trowbridge both Bythesea Road in which County Hall stands, and Delamere Road. Incidentally, the baby on the beach turned up again in the national press quite recently, when a VC awarded to a member of the family, was put up for sale.

Giving a road a pleasant name, even if the historical grounds for doing so are specious, is one thing. But it has been far surpassed in Malmesbury. Over the years it has been pointed out, time and time again, that the charter of Athelstan, on which the town's long-standing claim to be 'England's oldest borough' was generally based, is a post-conquest forgery. In 1951 a lawyer, W. Barnard Farady (Recorder of Barnstaple, a place with a similar claim), published a book called *The English and Welsh Boroughs*. In it he first introduced the idea of a charter of Alfred, in these completely vague terms: 'Malmesbury with an alleged charter of the same king [Alfred] dated 880. The grant of Alfred to Malmesbury is attested by the borough common-land, which was conveyed by the king to the borough as a reward for the services of the men of Malmesbury in the victory of Elandune [*recte* Ethandune] over the Danes.'

No such charter exists or ever has existed - it is pure fiction. Yet in 1980 its 1100th anniversary was celebrated. The facts, or rather the lack of them, have again been pointed out in no uncertain terms, but the fiction is still displayed in the town. When the excellent *BBC History Magazine* began its series of History Weekends with a visit to Malmesbury in 2013, the very glossy publicity stated, 'It is the oldest borough in England, with a charter given by Alfred the Great in 880'. And Michael Wood opened the conference with a lecture on Athelstan!

A final ramble takes me back to the Reverend Mr Goodrich on Trowbridge. One of the plates in his book is a rather ordinary drawing of a small windmill, simply captioned 'A Manor Mill'. In the text, however, is a 'Note on the Manor Mill illustration'. 'This

was specially drawn by Mr E. Norris of Harrow, Middlesex, for showing (in our volume), and is an almost exact likeness to the Manor Mill which formerly was an adjunct the Trowbridge Manor.'

Now we all know that, although windmills were not unknown in Wiltshire, they were not common, and there is no doubt at all that all the mills mentioned as being in Trowbridge from Domesday onwards were water mills. No documentary reference, and certainly no illustration, of a windmill in the manor exists. Yet here we have *an almost exact likeness* of one that stood there. Clearly Mr Goodrich assumed that all manor mills were alike, and that if Mr Norris could find one to draw, it would provide a valid illustration for a book on Trowbridge. The question remains, did Mr Norris scour the still rural lanes of north Middlesex or Hertfordshire to find a mill to draw? Luckily, I stumbled on the answer some years ago. No, he didn't. He saw a copy of Orwin's classic book on Laxton, in Nottinghamshire, England's last common field village, and copied a photograph in it. He also copied the man with two horses in the foreground of his drawing.

Ken Rogers

A RECTOR'S NOTEBOOK: PRINCE LEOPOLD



Prince Leopold

Some years ago, while searching through records for some Codford history, I came across a notebook which had belonged to the Revd. Douglas Maclean, rector of Codford St Peter from 1884 to 1915. During that time he kept a diary of sorts

in the notebook, in which he recorded particular incidents which occurred in the village which seemed of interest or importance to him. Among the notes on cottages burning down and the theft of the almsbox, the wounding or killing of Boer War soldiers, the opening of the double railway line from Codford to Heytesbury, were a group of entries recording some facts of which the Revd. Maclean was obviously very proud, though some of them had occurred before his time. These centred around Prince Leopold, the Duke of Albany, and this article examines the connections of this young man and his wife to Codford and the Wylve Valley.

Leopold George Duncan Albert was the eighth child and youngest son of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. He was born at Buckingham Palace on 7 April 1853 and it was at his birth that the Queen resorted to the newly-discovered chloroform to help ease her labour pains. Sadly, Leopold was born a haemophiliac and also suffered mild epileptic seizures. This meant a carefully protected childhood and adolescence, but he was a thoughtful, well-read and intellectual young man and spent three years at Christ Church, Oxford, from 1872 to 1875, living in Wykeham House, the royal residence in Oxford. It was while he was there that he met and became infatuated with Alice Liddell, Lewis Carroll's model for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. This came to the ears of the Queen and Leopold was summarily brought back from Oxford, though he was later awarded an honorary degree in Civil Law in 1876 (*Alumn. Oxon.*).

He travelled widely and even visited Canada, was made patron of several arts and literary societies and became a lifelong member of the Freemasons. The Queen even wished to make him her secretary and proposed that he should live at Queensmead near Windsor. But he must have found that being in the presence of his mother was too stifling and he and his tutor, Sir Robert Hawthorn Collins, concocted a plan to rent a place in the country. It appears that Robert had made the acquaintance of the then rector of Codford St Peter, the Revd. Henry Whitwick, and had subsequently become engaged to his daughter, Mary. It was probably this association with Wiltshire which led to the securing of Boyton Manor as a place of 'refuge' for the prince.

So from 1876 to 1882, Leopold leased Boyton Manor from the Lambert family and his tutor joined him there whenever he could, together with a small retinue. Robert was in his mid-thirties at the time and Leopold must have revelled in this new-found freedom, far from Court. They made friends locally, the Prince attended services at Codford St Peter church on many occasions, and he in his turn became friends with the rector. Boyton was a convenient place in the country, far enough away from his suffocating mother, but close to Codford railway station, where he could catch the train for

London, as and when necessary. It is said that he had the bridge in Station Road widened to allow his carriage to pass through more easily! At some point while he was living at Boyton, Leopold was taken ill. Queen Victoria proposed to descend on the manor house and everything was prepared at Codford station for the royal visit. Leopold, however, managed to recover and the proposed visit was not undertaken.

Leopold seems to have been a good patron locally and paid most of the expenses for the new organ at Boyton church, though it seems that Codford St Peter was his favoured place of worship and the Rectory there became a frequent place of call. Robert Collins's wedding took place at St Peter's church and the Prince stood as best man to the bridegroom. Codford must have been beside itself with celebration! Later, Sir Robert became Comptroller of the Prince's household. A photograph of the wedding party, including the prince, was taken outside the Rectory, but as yet this has not come to light.

In 1881, Leopold was created Duke of Albany and he began to look for a wife. After several royally suitable ladies had been turned down, Leopold finally married Princess Helen, daughter of Prinz Georg Viktor of Waldeck and Pyrmont. She was pretty and intelligent and it appears to have been a love-affair from the start. They became engaged,



Princess Helen on her wedding day

with the Queen's approval, in February 1882 and were married, amid much splendour, at St George's Chapel, Windsor, on 22 April (*The Ladies Treasury for 1882*, Mrs Warren, ed.)

Leopold and Helen made their home at Claremont House in Surrey, but at some point, soon after the

wedding, Leopold brought Helen down to Wiltshire to share the beauties of the countryside with her and, no doubt, to introduce her to his coterie of friends, far from Court. Helen evidently liked what she saw, as the Revd. Maclean made clear in his journal.

In 1883, the couple's first child, Alice, was born at Claremont House. She was to grow up to become the Countess of Athlone (d.1981). In the winter of 1883/4, Helen was pregnant with their second child. It was a particularly severe winter and Leopold's doctors advised him to travel south to warmer climes. He had a friend, a former equerry, Captain Perceval, who owned a small villa in Cannes, the Villa Nevada, where he lived with an aunt. In February 1884, Leopold travelled to Cannes with two friends and settled into the Villa Nevada. But on the 27 March, while preparing to attend the Battle of the Flowers in Nice, he fell on the steps of the Cercle Nautique and hit his knee hard on the bottom step. He was taken back to Villa Nevada in great pain and doctors gave him morphine. But during the night, he suffered a convulsive fit and died in the early hours of the following morning. His body was taken back to England and he was buried in the Albert Memorial Chapel at Windsor.



Plaque erected in memory of Prince Leopold in St George's Chapel, Windsor

Princess Helen gave birth to their son in July and remained a widow for the rest of her long life

(d.1922). The Villa Nevada eventually passed to her and she also made several trips down to the Wylve Valley, sometimes accompanied by her children. One of the first was in 1888, when, Revd. Maclean tells us, she 'stayed at Boyton Manor in April, for three weeks'. While there, she honoured Codford St Peter School with her presence at a concert, to which she took her children. Prince Oscar of Sweden and his new bride also visited the parish that day, though what their connection was, the Rector does not say. But the duchess attended church at St Peter's and afterwards visited the Revd. and Mrs Maclean and also went to see Mrs Whightwick, the previous rector's widow. There is ample evidence that the duchess was a caring person, hard-working, concerned for those in need and much involved with welfare work.



The Duchess of Albany with her children

In 1891 the Revd. Maclean must have felt enormous pride when he received the following from the Duchess:

Claremont, Esher

Sept 28th '91

Dear Mr Maclean,

I hear you are decorating your nice old Church, therefore I am now writing to you to ask you to let me send you a small contribution towards the funds for this work. The Duke was very fond of going to that Church and in remembrance of him, I should be very glad to be allowed to add my small share in beautifying your Church.

May I send my love to your Wife? And hoping she and your Children are all well. Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

Helen

Almost by return of post, he sent the following,

rather obsequious reply, though to be fair, it was very much the way in which people wrote at that time:

*Codford St Peter Rectory,
Sept 29th (S. Michael & All Angels) 1891*

Madam,

I beg to thank your Royal Highness very sincerely and respectfully for your entirely unexpected kindness. We value extremely this mark of your Royal Highness's interest in our parish and Church, which you so feelingly express.

My Wife wishes to be allowed to send her affectionate duty.

*I have the honour to be, Madam,
With much respect and gratitude,
Your Royal Highness's dutiful Servant,
Douglas Maclean*

To HRH the Duchess of Albany

The Duchess's gift was spent on a copy of an eighteen-branch Flemish chandelier, made in brass. It hangs above the entrance to the sanctuary and bears the following inscription: *dedicavit illustr^{ma} princissipa Helena ducessa de Albany 1891*. A lamp was also purchased.



Brass chandelier in Codford St Peter Church

In 1885 the Duke's hatchment was placed on the south wall of the chancel, above where the Duke used to sit. It was installed at the Duchess's charge and cost 6½ guineas.

The Revd. Maclean goes on to describe other visits to Codford by royalty, but none has the intimacy of the Albanies with this part of the world. In 1878, when a public house and store was built for the then substantial mill at Upton Lovell, it was



The Albany hatchment, with the arms of both the Duke and Duchess of Albany

unanimously decided to name it *The Prince Leopold*; at least, that's how the story goes and there is no reason to disbelieve it. Leopold was the most popular of the royal princes at a time when the Germanic royal family was viewed with much suspicion.

Sally Thomson

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The Prince Leopold Inn, Upton Lovell: www.princeleopold.co.uk

COMPULSORY CHOIR PRACTICE AT WEST KNOYLE

Memorandum that in the year 1724 on Easter Monday the 6th day of April it was then agreed on by the lord of the manor the minister and chief of the parish that there should be erected a gallery in the church of Knoyle for all those that are singers of the same parish and will be conformable to the rules hereafter mentioned, etc. . . . [there follows the financial arrangements for making the gallery, with a list of subscribers] . . . The subscribers above named being of this parish and singers have right in this gallery and no other person to be admitted but singers, who must first obtain leave of the lord of this manor in writing and public notice given to the singers that it is by the lords approbation of such a person to be one of their number or quire etc. Which number of singers must be conformable and guided by a master chosen by the lord in manner aforesaid



St Mary's Church, West Knoyle

for guiding and ordering tunes for the service of the church. Anyone refusing so to do or neglecting to attend the services of the church for three Sundays successively (except prevented by sickness), and without leave of the lord of this manor, shall forfeit his, her or their rights in this gallery. And it is further agreed, that for keeping the said 'salmedry?' [psalmody?? -but not mentioned before] in use, and for to improve the said art of singing, that all that are admitted into this gallery, do upon notice given by the master, meet twelve times in every year at the church or at any other convenient place the master shall appoint there to be taught and instructed in the art of singing for the space of 2 hours at a time, gratis, only to find candles and pay for cleaning the church or other place that should be made use of for the purpose. (WSA 2541/5, West Knoyle churchwardens' accounts, 1711-59, f. 38v.: some spellings modernised)

John Chandler

QUARTER SESSIONS AND THE RESTORATION

One of the interests of the first Wiltshire Quarter Sessions Order Book (WRS, vol. 67) was how it illustrated the extent to which the administrative system and the community were affected by the Civil War. It seemed appropriate now to look at the second Order Book (1655-1668) to see what was the impact of the Restoration.

Neither book makes any direct reference either to the execution of Charles I or the restoration of Charles II, and perhaps there was no reason for them to do so. Those events can, however, be picked up

in the change of the dating of the documents. The meeting held in January 1649 is dated using the regnal year (24 Charles I) but the next one at Easter uses simply the calendar year. This method continued until Michaelmas 1660 when regnal years were once again used (12 Charles II) – and they reverted to putting the date in Latin. Throughout the period much of the business such as poor law disputes and highway repairs went on as usual.

A significant change was in the Justices of the Peace. In the first Order Book it was apparent that there was an almost complete change of justices after 1643-4 when all those known as Royalist supporters no longer appeared on the attendance list. The opposite change came in 1660-61; only two of the 27 justices listed for those years sat at the Quarter Sessions in 1654. The new justices were clearly drawn from those who had been Royalists during the Civil War, such as Francis Seymour, Baron of Trowbridge and 'Duke' Stonehouse. The 'great survivor' was Francis Swanton who had been Clerk of the Assizes. He survived the 'purges' of both 1643 and 1660. He even managed to be acquitted of being an accessory in the Penruddock Rising.



Francis Seymour, Baron Trowbridge

It is well-known that, at the Restoration, ferocious reprisals were taken against the regicides – those who had signed the death warrant of Charles I. Also Royalists were re-established in the major offices

of state. But the second order book shows that this movement was carried much further down the social order than perhaps one might have expected.

One good example comes from the house of correction at Fisherton Anger. Roger Thorpe was appointed master of the house in 1646. At some stage he seems to have joined the King's forces and in 1649 he was replaced by Daniel Drake. Roger met his death during the war. Then at the Michaelmas Session 1660 his widow, Mary Thorpe, appeared with a letter from the King demanding that Drake be dismissed and she be appointed in his place. It was made clear that this was a recompense for her husband having 'suffered death for his loyalty to his late Majesty'. Two years later Mary married Matthew Best and he was then recognised as the master of the House.

Another widow who came forward in 1660 was Elizabeth Poulton of Pewsey. Her husband Thomas had been involved in the Penruddock Rising and, as a result, had been executed at Exeter. 'Thomas Poulton being engaged with John Penruddock and others of his Majesty's loyal subjects in the late engagement in the West for his Majesty's service was for such apprehended and most unjustly put to a shameful death'. Elizabeth was given £5 'until some other way for a better subsistence shall be provided for her'.



Capt. John Penruddock

The biggest issue, however, seems to have been the matter of pensions for injured soldiers. The first Order Book records almost countless pensions being awarded to soldiers who had been injured during the Civil War – but all of these had been fighting on the Parliamentary side. The pensions were paid for from a fund which had been set up under an Elizabethan statute of 1593 with a weekly levy of

three pence on each parish. This had to be increased to six pence in 1648 to meet the increasing costs. But the record for the meeting at Christmas 1660 contains the decision: 'Now ordered that all pensions formerly made or granted to any person or persons as to or for a maimed soldier or mariner at any sessions heretofore shall be and are hereby revoked'. There is also a reference to an Act of Parliament amending the Elizabethan Act specifically for 'the relief of maimed soldiers who have faithfully served his Majesty and his Royal father in the late wars'. This can only mean that all the pensions awarded to the Parliamentary soldiers were abruptly cancelled.

Quarter Sessions then began to receive petitions from those soldiers who had been injured while fighting on the Royalist side and these were even more numerous than they had received from the Parliamentary soldiers. Thirteen pensions were granted at the first 'Restoration' meeting at Christmas 1660. At Michaelmas 1662 there were 42 awards and the Easter and Michaelmas 1663 Sessions records contain lists of 50 and 29 grants respectively. Quarter Sessions could not cope with so many requests and arranged for local J.P.s to vet each petition to verify its authenticity before it was submitted to the full Quarter Sessions. In 1662 the total cost of the pensions was £125 3s. 1½d. To meet this cost, the levy on parishes was trebled to 9d. a week in 1662 and raised again in 1663 to 12d. The individual entries also have an interest in that they usually give the name of the soldier, his place of residence and the particular regiment in which he served.

Although the Restoration saw a certain degree of religious toleration this did not extend to many non-conformists, especially the Quakers. There is a nice entry for Michaelmas 1662 at Marlborough. Four men (Adam Goldney, John Edwards, Robert Starr and William Jones all of Chippenham and obviously Quakers) all 'came into the court irreverently with their hats on their heads'. When they refused to remove them each was fined £5 and committed to the county gaol until they paid up.

The records of Quarter Sessions have perhaps been rather neglected but they do contain a wealth of information throwing light on life in Wiltshire during the troubled periods of the 17th century.

Ivor Slocombe

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Slocombe, I., ed. 2014 *Wiltshire Quarter Sessions Order Book 1642-1654* (Wiltshire Record Society, vol. 67, 2014).
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ROSE PENDER

Lady Rose Pender (born Rose Gregge-Hopwood in 1843) lived at Donhead House, Wiltshire, from 1902 until her death in 1932. Her husband, Sir James Pender was the son of Sir John Pender, the head of what became Cable & Wireless, so a pioneer in global telegraph communications. James had been MP for Mid-Northamptonshire from 1895 to 1900, and was made a baronet in 1897.¹

I first came across Rose Pender when investigating the women's suffrage movement in south Wiltshire. She made frequent appearances on the platform at opposition meetings, and addressed organisations such as the South Wilts Constitutional Association, and the South Wilts Women's Imperial League. Having given myself a Christmas present of a subscription to online British Newspaper Archive, I have also found her as a supporter of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and the National Antivivisection Society (despite their time at Thornby Hall in Northamptonshire being characterised by 'a good deal of hunting').²

It was with some surprise that I discovered that she was the author of two travel books. These describe adventurous journeys she made, admittedly with her husband, but to distinctly less comfortable parts of the world at the time. In 1878 James was

sent 'on a mission to obtain subsidies from the Cape, Natal and elsewhere, with a view to the laying of a submarine telegraph cable from Aden to Natal along the east coast of Africa'.³ (NT p1) At a fortnight's notice, Rose decided to go too, 'being unwilling that he should go alone to those distant and wild places'. As well as Cape Town, Natal and Aden, they visited Mozambique, Zanzibar, Mauritius and Egypt, always taking opportunities to explore inland from the coast.

Five years later they went to New York, then across the country to Los Angeles and San Francisco, and back, by train for the long stages, otherwise in horse-drawn vehicles or on foot. The purpose this time was to visit the cattle ranches in which James and his business associates had interests, a not uncommon investment for well-off British people at that period. Again they went 'off the beaten track' whenever the chance arose, including climbing Pikes Peak on foot through deep snow. *A Lady's Experiences in the Wild West in 1883* is widely quoted by modern authors working on early women travellers in North America.⁴

I will be making a short presentation about this aspect of her life at an event on 8 March 2017 (International Women's Day) at Bristol Museum in association with their current exhibition on Adela Breton, and linked to the West of England & South Wales Women's History Network.

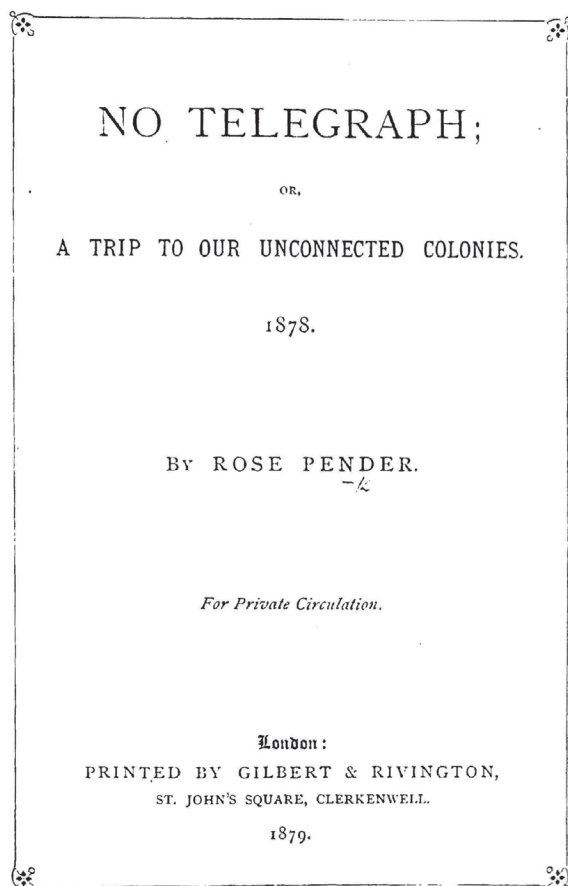
However that is not really the source of my question. Rose and James had no children. But in her will, Rose described Amelia Sophia Rous Askwith as 'my adopted daughter'. Not having the skills of a family historian, I am wondering how to go about finding more about her? Amelia Sophia Rous Webster was born in 1877, and married John Browning Harrison Askwith in 1910; he died in 1927. The surname can cause some confusion; for example Donhead WI recorded receiving a letter of thanks from Mrs Askwith (sic) for the wreath sent to Lady Pender's funeral. Mrs Askwith's own tribute said 'To the dear one, in memory of our happy love, from Rous'.⁵

A subsidiary question, is there any way of locating a painting that was reported as exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition 1872? It was a portrait of Mrs James Pender by Charles Allen du Val.

Jane Howells

References:

1. Relevant family and business archives are in Northumbria and Cornwall.
2. Obituary *Salisbury Journal* 6 May 1932
3. *No Telegraph; or a trip to our unconnected colonies*, p.1.
4. For example Karen M Morin 'Trains through the Plains: the Great Plains Landscape of Victorian Women Travellers', *Great Plains Quarterly* Vol. 18 No 3 1998.
5. Report of funeral in *Western Gazette* 13 May 1932



The front cover of Rose Pender's book

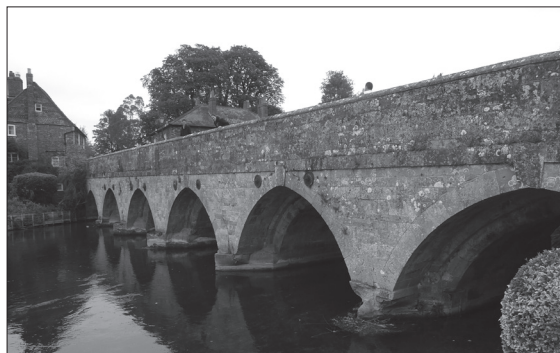
THE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES GROUP

(Abridged)

Transport infrastructure is a fashionable subject; the Government has even established a National Infrastructure Commission. The news is full of stories about HS2, HS3 and the widening of the A303. Bookshops' shelves are full of books on railways, canals and stage coaches. In comparison, books or even articles about the history of transport infrastructure before 1700 are rare, and works on bridges rarer. Yet it is increasingly clear that the Middle Ages had a key role in the creation of our transport infrastructure. Indeed, the construction of a large network of mainly stone bridges was one of the greatest achievements of medieval England, comparable to the building of great churches in the same period. To increase our knowledge of this important subject, a few years ago a number of us from many disciplines both in England and elsewhere who have been studying bridges or related subjects came together to form the International Bridges Group (IBG) which meets annually.

This year the Group is delighted to be meeting in Salisbury over the weekend of **14-16 July**. The main part of the event is on **Saturday 15th** when there will be a conference in the Salisbury Museum with papers devoted to a range of aspects of bridges and related subjects. This will be followed by a drinks reception in a private garden by Harnham meadows with stunning views of the cathedral.

On **Friday 14th**, two eminent scholars with an unsurpassed knowledge of Salisbury, John Chandler and Tim Tatton-Brown, will lead a tour of Salisbury. For me the highlight will be an examination of the 13th-century Harnham Bridge with the remains of its medieval chapel; surely this bridge could, like the Charles Bridge in Prague, be reserved for pedestrians. There will also be a tour of the Close and the rivers of the town, marking the sites of the now lost medieval bridges.



Harnham Bridge

Most medieval bridges survived until the middle of the 18th century; if an arch or two collapsed, they were patched up. However, in the 1760s attitudes

completely changed, and in the following 50 years most were destroyed, as the Georgians made 'improvements' to speed the flow of traffic. It was rather like the 1960s. But the level of destruction was variable; in some counties, most were demolished. In other counties, considerable numbers have survived; many of the bridges have not been demolished, but widened if necessary. Fortunately, Dorset is one of these counties, and on **Sunday 16 July** we will have a tour of some of the finest surviving medieval bridges in the south of England, including White Mill Bridge, Sturminster Marshall, Crawford Bridge, Spetisbury, and Wool Bridge next to the manor house described as Wellbridge House by Thomas Hardy and the site of Tess of the D'Urberville's and Angel Clare's unfortunate honeymoon.

The International Bridges Group includes scholars from a very wide range of disciplines: historians, architectural historians, engineers, archaeologists and literary scholars. We have not finalised our speakers for Salisbury yet, but in previous meetings we have heard papers from Professor Christopher Wilson on 'Henry Yevele and the Chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury on London Bridge', Professor John Blair on 'English Bridges in the 8th century', Peter Cross Rudkin on 'Ribbed masonry arched bridges in England', Bill Harvey on 'Aspects of New Bridge, Kingston Bagpuize, revealed in an Engineering Assessment' and Professor Susan Irvine on 'The symbolism of bridges in early medieval literature'.

There are a small number of places available for the weekend. A small fee will be charged to cover the cost of room hire, coach and reception. Please contact David Harrison on dfharrison1138@gmail.com if you would like to join us.

David Harrison

A NEGLECTED BRITTON MANUSCRIPT

The failure of Sir Thomas Phillipps to emulate in north Wiltshire Sir Richard Colt Hoare's series of six *Modern Wiltshire* volumes covering the south was hardly surprising in view of the former's temperament and wider interests. More surprising, perhaps, was the enthusiasm with which Hoare had initially entertained their collaboration from 1818 until 1822, when Phillipps fled his creditors and sojourned in Switzerland.¹ But this did not mean that there was never a north Wiltshire volume written to complement Hoare's work.

Many years ago I recall coming across a manuscript volume in WANHS Library, pertaining to Chippenham hundred, which I then did nothing about; but now that the VCH is working on this area, and with my involvement, it seemed useful to hunt for it and to see whether my memory was correct, and whether it might prove useful. After

initial failure, Sandy Haynes and I eventually tracked it down and it turned out to be a work of some 280 pages entitled, 'Topographical Collections for the Hundred of Chippenham by John Britton FSA'.² In fact it covers two hundreds, Chippenham and North Damerham, (and there is a second title page) and is arranged parish by parish in very much the same manner as Hoare's *Modern Wiltshire*, and quite unlike Britton's *Beauties . . .* series.



John Britton

The only references that I could find to this work in Britton's 'autobiography' merely refer to large and numerous unpublished collections for Wiltshire, especially the hundreds of Chippenham and North Damerham.³ But the manuscript in question can be approximately dated and Britton's intention deduced from a prospectus for it, 'preparing for publication', which is reprinted in the third volume of his *Beauties of Wiltshire*, published in 1825.⁴ This explains, 'Some time back I issued a few copies of the following Announcement, and have since obtained much topographical information respecting some of the places therein named. I give it additional publicity, in the hopes of directing the attention of some gentlemen who reside in the northern part of Wiltshire to the subject.' The prospectus itself alludes to Hoare's *Hints on the Topography of Wiltshire*, which was published in 1819, and the same author's intention to publish the history of some portions of *Modern Wiltshire*, which first began to appear in 1822. So its *termini* seem to be fixed between these dates.

Britton did not much like Hoare and Phillipps, and certainly objected to *Ancient Wiltshire*'s 'unwieldy, unpleasant and expensive size'.⁵ But the survival of this unpublished volume and the prospectus for it show that in the 1820s he was minded to attempt something similar for his native area, notwithstanding Hoare's deluded arrangement with Phillipps. By the 1830s he had changed his mind – perhaps he had not received much positive feedback from his 1825

appeal – and decided instead that local history was best published on a parish-by-parish basis. This was his impetus in founding the Wiltshire Topographical Society in 1839/40, which by 1843 claimed to have ten parish histories (and several other projects) under way, although only Grittleton's was published.⁶ He never abandoned his belief in the principle of 'many hands make light work', however, or '*multorum manibus grande levatur onus*', as Aubrey wrongly attributed to Ovid, and WANHS followed as its motto.⁷ In the prospectus for the unpublished Chippenham hundred Britton proposed a list of 27 queries about their history which he hoped that local gentry would be able to supply for each parish. This idea was repeated in his inaugural address upon the founding of WANHS in 1853, and was subsequently taken up on the society's behalf by John Wilkinson in 1855-7.⁸

Quite apart from its inherent interest as an early experiment in 'crowd-sourcing', Britton's Chippenham manuscript has the more prosaic use as a source, like Hoare's *Modern Wiltshire*, of fugitive local history, and one purpose of this note is to ask whether any of our members has discovered and used it, or can cite anyone else who has, in the distant or recent past. It is to be hoped that it will now be read and valued by VCH editors and others interested in the Chippenham area. Indeed, I have now photographed it digitally in its entirety for the use of the VCH, with a digital copy at WANHS, and I understand that there are plans for it to be transcribed.

John Chandler

References:

1. WRS vol. 53, ix-xi; Woodbridge, K., *Landscape and Antiquity* (1970), 255; Currie, C.R.J. and Lewis, C.P.(eds.) *English County Histories: a guide* (1994), 419
2. WANHS MS 4080 (John Britton box 2).
3. Britton J. and Jones, T.E., *Britton's Autobiography*, pt.2, 40, 211.
4. after p.lxi.
5. Currie and Lewis, 417-19. The quote, taken from Woodbridge, 229, refers to *Ancient*, not *Modern Wiltshire*, but presumably reflects Britton's opinion of both. See also WRS vol. 53, xi; Stratford, J. *Catalogue of the Jackson collection . . .* (1981), 36, n.65.
6. Jackson, J.E. *History of the parish of Grittleton* (1843), p.v.
7. Aubrey, J. *Natural history of Wiltshire* (1847), 124; Pugh, C.W. *Centenary history of WANHS* (1953), 13 n.
8. *WANHM* vol.1, 45-9; vol. 4, 253-6; WANHS MSS 438, box 41.

BOOKSHELF

Two members have had books published during the year. Dr Alex Craven, as noted in the editorial, saw the publication of his WRS volume, No.69, *The Churchwardens' Accounts of St Mary's, Devizes, 1633-1689*. This is a carefully edited volume with some delightful entries, as well as the more mundane rental accounts.

For example: 1658-9: *Item paid for Oyle & for the Clock & the Chymes 2s 0d*, and sadly, *Item paid to John Long & Henry Cosens of Shrewton towards a breif for that their houses were burnt 2s 6d*. Note this is eight years before the Great Fire of London and is a reminder of how vulnerable to fire timber-framed buildings were. And in 1680-1: *Paid Goody Merchant for mending the Communion Table Carpet 2s 0d*. Which reminds us that at this time, carpets covered tables, not floors!

The volume has an excellent introduction, covering such topics as the town and parish, the accounting, the items upon which sums were spent and the MS itself. There is also a full and useful glossary. The book is illustrated with an image of the first page of the MS and there are also several clear and illuminating maps and enlargements of some areas of the maps, which help to bring the accounts to life. (Craven, A. ed. 2016 *The Churchwardens' Accounts of St Mary's, Devizes, 1633-1689* (Chippenham: WRS vol.69))

The second publication in the past year was the *Recorder* editor's long-term project, culminating in a modest paperback entitled, *Wiltshire Almshouses and their Founders*.

This book began life as an academic dissertation and had to be heavily adapted to make it suitable for the general public. It is fully illustrated and contains an introduction to almshouses, tracing their development from medieval hospitals and hospices; the bulk of the work is a gazetteer of all known almshouses in Wiltshire, both extant and extinct, up to 1900; and a section consisting of short biographies of many of the founders of the almshouses mentioned in the gazetteer. It is currently available from the WSHC, price £10.50 + p&p.

(Thomson, S. ed. 2016 *Wiltshire Almshouses and their Founders* (Sutton Veny: Hobnob Press, for the Wiltshire Buildings Record))

PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS BY STANDING ORDERS

Earlier this year I wrote to all members who pay their annual subscription by Standing Order. I explained that Lloyds Bank required us to change our existing bank account to a new Treasurer's Business Account. This new account has a different sort code and account number so I asked members to amend their Standing Orders accordingly. I am most grateful to the very many members who have done so.

But, unfortunately, 46 members failed to do so. Luckily I have been able to keep the old account open for a limited period and so all these payments have been received. But I do ask these members to ensure that their Standing Orders are amended before January 2018.

The new account details are:
Lloyds Bank Wiltshire Record Society Sort code 30-90-92 Account no. 33210560.

Members are also respectfully reminded that subs, which remain at £15 per annum, are now due.

Ivor Slocombe (Hon Treasurer)

AGM

I can now confirm that this year's AGM will be held on Saturday 17 June at 2.30pm at the Salisbury Museum. I think we can safely say that we hope to be able to launch the next volume and to have a talk by the author, Barry Williamson. The title is 'The Arundells of Ashcombe and Salisbury in the late 18th century'. We have chosen the Cathedral Close as our location because it includes the house 'Arundell's'. The name comes from James Everard Arundel, son of the 6th Lord Arundel, who had married John Wyndham's daughter Ann in 1751. (Wyndham was the tenant of the house). The Arundells were a distinguished Roman Catholic family. Although the house does not have a room big enough to accommodate our meeting, it will be open to the public & anyone who wishes to visit can do so.

Helen Taylor (Hon Secretary)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS OF POSSIBLE INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Talk on Brixton Deverill Roman villa

Speaker: Dr David Roberts of Historic England

Friday 10 March

St John's Church, Hindon.

Tickets £15 from:

Vicky Macaskie (cash or cheque)

The Fonthill Estate Office,

The Old Dairy,

Fonthill Bishop,

Salisbury,

SP3 5SH

or

Tor Beer (BACS cheque or cash)

Chickladelectures@gmail.com, 01747 820435

Coach trips run by the Wiltshire FHS

Saturday 8 April **Who Do You Think You Are?**

Live Show at Birmingham NEC.

Saturday 3 June **National Archives, Kew**

Saturday 7 October **Imperial War Museum, London**

Saturday 9 September **Hay on Wye**

For further details, timings and pick-up points, contact Jenny Pope jandrpope@greenbee.net or telephone 01793 852662